

loved ones who are left behind are owed our respect and support. We must continue to work to ensure the fallen are remembered and those they leave behind are not forgotten.

In this time of war, my thoughts and prayers are with all who serve this Nation and with those families who have made the ultimate sacrifice. I am deeply grateful for this service. Please let us not forget the courage and selflessness of these individuals—to them we owe a debt beyond our means to repay. This Nation shall forever stand grateful and proud of each man and woman who has willingly accepted the call to defend our freedoms and provide for our safety at home.

CELEBRATING ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today with the great pleasure of recognizing the month of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and honoring the many contributions that Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander descent have made to our great Nation and to my home State of Nevada.

I am proud of the role this distinguished chamber played in the designation of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, albeit many years too late. On June 19, 1978, some 135 years after the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant to the United States, Representatives Frank Horton and Norman Mineta introduced a joint resolution “authorizing and requesting the President to proclaim the 7-day period beginning on May 4, 1979, as ‘Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week’”—H.J. Res. 1007. Two months after being passed overwhelmingly by the House, the Senate unanimously approved the joint resolution and promptly sent it to President Jimmy Carter for his signature.

In addition to recognizing the onset of Japanese immigration to America, the month of May was selected because May 10, 1869, also known as Golden Spike Day, marked the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States, to whose construction Chinese pioneers contributed greatly. Hundreds of miles of this railroad passed through a newly admitted and mostly uninhabited western state that I have called home for my whole life. Without the tireless efforts and tremendous sacrifices of these Asian settlers, the state of Nevada would have remained largely disconnected from the rest of our country for an untold number of years.

Rising to support H.J. Res. 1007, Senator Spark Matsunaga, who served the State of Hawaii for over 13 honorable years before succumbing to cancer, remarked that “most Americans are unaware of the history of Pacific and Asian Americans in the United States, and their contributions to our Nation’s cultural heritage.” He continued by saying that one of the two main purposes of the joint resolution was “to

imbue a renewed sense of pride among our citizens of Pacific and Asian ancestry.” I am delighted that the many celebrations taking place around the country to commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, particularly in my home State of Nevada, have showcased the enduring sense of pride that Senator Matsunaga spoke about nearly three decades ago.

Almost 14 years after President Carter signed H.J. Res. 1007 into law, Representative FRANK Horton once again assumed the leadership role on this issue and introduced a bill to permanently designate May of each year as “Asian Pacific American Heritage Month”—H.R. 5572. After this bill was passed by both Houses of Congress, President George H.W. Bush signed it into law on October 23, 1992.

Ever since, our country has taken the time at the end of each spring to celebrate the innumerable contributions that Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander ancestry have made and continue to make to the United States. To the roughly 15 million Asian and Pacific Islander Americans who currently live in our country, and most especially to the thousands of those who reside in Nevada, I wish you all the best during this joyous time of year. I urge my colleagues in this Chamber to do the same.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH R. EGAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I join Senator ENSIGN today to recognize the remarkable life of Joe Egan, who passed away on May 7, 2008.

Joe is known in Nevada and throughout the country as a skilled attorney who worked hard to make our Nation safer and to stop the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump from being built in Nevada. I think Joe hated the nuclear waste dump project as much as I do. In his obituary, he arranged to have his ashes spread over Yucca Mountain. “Radwaste buried here only over my dead body,” he said.

After learning in 1996 that Yucca Mountain was scientifically unsuitable for storing radioactive waste, he was deputized as the lead lawyer for the State of Nevada’s efforts to fight the dump. Nevadans should be proud to have had such a magnificent person fighting for them.

Joe was a key force in dealing multiple blows to the project and bringing it to a standstill. Over the years, Joe has made it abundantly clear that the project is unsafe and that the science behind it is unsound. It speaks to his character that although he was not from Nevada, he fought against this project with both passion and strength because he knew that it was the right thing to do. When we finally end the battle against the Yucca Mountain project, we will have done it together with Joe and his team.

Joe was by no means antinuclear. He just wanted to see nuclear power produced safely and the dangerous wastes

it produces to be managed properly. He also worked hard on nonproliferation efforts, helping the United States secure thousands of tons of weapons-grade uranium from all over the world.

Joe’s legacy will live on through his family, friends, and through his tremendous efforts to keep Nevadans and all Americans safe.

Mr. ENSIGN. We have both had the pleasure to know and work with Joe. He was a brilliant man a Minnesota native who received three degrees, in physics, nuclear engineering, and technology and policy from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He received his law degree from Columbia University. During his lifetime, Joe did everything from working in the control room of a nuclear powerplant to serving as president of the International Nuclear Law Association. Joe was a strong supporter of nuclear energy. Throughout his life, he fought for the development of sensible, sound, and safe nuclear policies.

Joe served as Nevada’s lead attorney in the fight against dumping nuclear waste in Nevada. Applying his deep knowledge of the law and nuclear engineering, Joe helped the State of Nevada in our fight against Yucca Mountain.

Mr. REID. Joe Egan was a talented person who led a rich life which was tragically cut short by an aggressive cancer. I am saddened by his death, and will not forget all that he has done for the people of Nevada. To his wife, children, and family, I wish to extend my deepest sympathies.

Mr. ENSIGN. The work that Joe has accomplished during his lifetime will forever stand as a fitting testament to his character. He was an amazing lawyer, a great father, and he will be sorely missed by all. My sincere condolences go out to his family.

CONGRATULATING MENA BOULANGER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the contributions of Mena Boulanger to the Chicagoland area. Next week, Mena is retiring after 30 years of work to raise public awareness of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and its conservation efforts throughout its 76,000 acres.

In the fall of 1973, the Boulanger family—Mena and David and children Sarah and John—made their way from Seattle, WA, to Cook County, IL. The family began spending almost every weekend exploring the various Forest Preserve District sites in the Western suburbs of Chicago. Leaving behind the landscape of their native Pacific Northwest, the family’s appreciation of the Midwest flora and fauna came slowly, and so did a commitment to the prairie around Chicago—lands now part of Chicago Wilderness.

In 1979, Mena began as the first, full-time Director of Development for the Lincoln Park Zoological Society. For